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SUBJECT: PROPOSALS FOR BIOTECH EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

REF: A) FAS WASHDC 663775 B) 03 ZAGREB 2224

[1](#)1. In response to ref A, Mission proposes the following biotech outreach activities:

- placement of biotech articles targeted for Central European market, especially those by European authors.
- funding to help promote local pro-biotech organizations.
- organize trips for regulators to EU countries that are relatively pro-biotech, e.g., Spain, to see their approval process.
- funding to support travel of Croatian biotech stakeholders and journalists to U.S. and to Europe, for international conferences and to meet pro-biotech groups (currently, anti-biotech NGOs fund travel to meet with anti-GMO speakers and groups).

[1](#)2. Target Markets:

The U.S. has export growth potential in the following markets, which would be stymied by anti-biotech attitudes and legislation:

- soybeans
- processed food that contains soybeans and corn
- feed that contains soybeans and corn

[1](#)3. Current Conditions in the Targeted Markets - affecting the intended commodity or product:

- FAS Zagreb will email table containing details of imports to Croatia from World and U.S. for the targeted commodities to FAS/ICD and FAS/OA/BIG. In 2002 the U.S. exported approximately \$1 million in coarse grains, \$1 million in soybean meal, \$1 million each in non-nut snack foods, breakfast cereal and pet food, and \$7 million in other consumer-oriented products.
- Please see ref B for details of Croatian legislation regarding biotech. In brief, a framework of laws has been enacted that in theory will allow the import and cultivation of biotech products, under heavy regulation. How these laws will be implemented will in great part depend on how the public perceives the risk of biotech products.

[1](#)4. Project Objectives:

To open the door for U.S. products in Croatian market by:

- demonstrating that Croatia can be "European," risk-adverse, environmentally sensitive and use biotech at the same time.
- convincing consumers, regulators and politicians that biotech is safe.

[1](#)5. Performance Measures:

Changes in market accessibility for mentioned products, to be measured by:

- increased number of neutral or positive press reports on television and in print;
- first approvals for biotech products

[1](#)6. Rationale:

This market could close for almost all food products containing even traces of "GMOs." In the future, the Croatian model may be followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries in the region, increasing the injury to U.S. exporters and local consumers. We need not only

to communicate the safety of this technology and quality of U.S. products, we need to "Europeanize" biotech. Currently, biotech is seen in Croatia as an American imposition. Anti-biotech forces continually say they are following the "European way," which to their minds means no-GMOs. We need to show that biotech has been used in Europe for years, and that there are pro-biotech countries and forces in Europe. Activities will probably not have an immediate,

obvious impact but over time they should create a more balanced Croatian position about biotechnology, openness to consumer choice, and allow U.S. products to re-enter the market.

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